

Rev Amos A. Phelps
Boston

July 25. 1833.

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Amelia A. Parker

to the general welfare, including both master & slave still we have no business to continue in sin that grace may abound even for an instant - As a matter of fact however you insist that all schemes of gradual abolition have proved inefficient, & you quote the example of England as an illustration of the truth of this assertion - Now I believe it is a fact that the British government never have adopted any plan of gradual emancipation. ~~The~~ Parliament may have recommended divers most schemes to the Colonists or repeatedly urged them to adopt a plan of their own, but what one scheme has ever been tried? Truly it appears to me that in order to demonstrate the inefficiency of a plan an attempt at least should be made to execute it. Now I think I should be safe in saying that no scheme of gradual emancipation that has been fairly tried, has ever been found in inefficient. How was slavery abolished in New England & in the middle states. Why in every instance by some scheme of gradual emancipation. According to your doctrine the Legislature told the people that they might go on sinning for some ten or twenty or thirty years & then they must cease - But I must stop - pardon me for having trespasssed so long on your time & patience - I do not intend to repeat the offence

Yours Truly
H. D. Parker

Has the appeal to a sense of duty, or - to motives of interest been more efficient in producing the Temperance Reformation. My own observation is decidedly in favor of the latter & I ~~hope~~ think the same motives will lead to the abolition of Slavery

acted merely as the executioners of a sentence passed by competent authority; and then very act, unauthorized, were expressly prohibited. To make the cases analogous you should produce a general letter of licence from the Deity still unrevoked, to steal & murder ad libitum. When you do this I will acknowledge myself in the dilemma: viz. I must renounce the divine authority of the SS. or admit that theft and murder are not in all circumstances a sin. Now what do you think of the divine prescription of a Code of laws containing such provisions as these: "Ye shall not steal from one another; ye are my servants, but from the heathen that are round about you, from them may ye steal whenever it seemeth good in your eyes. Moreover ye shall not murder your brethren even the children of Israel, but the strangers that sojourn among you, & their families which they beget in your land ye may murder at pleasure" - Yet such is, mutatis mutandis substantially the provision of the law with regard to Slavery - a provision which, whatever others may think the Deity thought not inconsistent with the Command "thou shalt not oppress the stranger &c."

That Abraham held his Slaves as property I cannot doubt. His "Special dispensation" I believe is not on record.

Is Slavery a sin because wrong in itself or because it is divinely prohibited? If the first, your rank admits of no 'qualification' - if the last where is the prohibition, express or implied, to be found?

If Slavery is in all cases a sin, the "remedy" you propose is the true ^{one}. The question does not admit of debate - Consequences are not to be taken into consideration; and moreover there can be no "extreme" or "exceptional" cases - one such would overthrow the doctrine. Tho' immediate emancipation re involve both master & slave in inevitable perdition still first prostituted, & tho' a given scheme of gradual abolition to be could be demonstrated to be an effectual remedy & at the same time most conducive

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My Dear Sir

It was neither my design, wish nor expectation to involve you in a 'written discussion' on the ^{subject of} Slavery when I first addressed you, nor is it now. Tho' thankful for the Comments that have fallen from your table, & disposed to be grateful for all future favors of a similar kind I shall by no means think you wanting in courtesy or kindness if they are entirely withheld. If you ~~deem~~ what I write worth the time consumed in its ~~personal~~ perusal I shall be satisfied. At the same time I have long intended to solicit such an interview as you propose for the verbal discussion of this subject but for this purpose I shall cheerfully wait ~~for~~ your convenience.

It was my original intention to have furnished you simply with the references contained in my Cart. My subsequent remarks were an after thought, but I cannot permit your comments on these remarks to pass unnoticed. - Waiving for the present your "qualification" your fundamental principle or proposition is that, "Slavery is in all circumstances a sin". I quoted a part of the Jewish Code of Law to prove - not that Slavery was of course justifiable now, but that it might be so in some circumstances, and thus much I still think it does prove, clearly, conclusively, unanswerably. If I had relied on the case of the Gibeonites your allusion to the Canaanites would have been in point as it is pardon me if I say there is in my opinion no analogy between the cases. The Jews were commanded to exterminate the Canaanites & were punished for their disobedience so too they were commanded to "spoil the Egyptians" & in a manner that with ^{out} such authority would have been no better than theft or robbery. But these commands were limited in terms to a single specific act. They established no general rule of conduct. In obeying them the Jews